

## SANITARY INSPECTOR BLAMES HOUSING CONDITIONS FOR WEAK, PUNY CHILDREN

Charles B. Ball, the chief sanitary inspector, told the conference of community boys now in session at the Y. M. C. A., that the small, poorly ventilated homes were to blame for the development of weak, puny children.

During the course of his speech he undoubtedly spoke many truths.

"We of Chicago may well inquire what improper housing has to do with the large number of children arrested in a year," said Mr. Ball. "As many as 15,000 are brought into our Juvenile Court in twelve months.

"Three things are needed to cure all the housing evils:

"Every new house must be so built that it will be fit to live in.

"Every existing house unfit for habitation must be made fit or demolished.

"Old and new houses alike must be occupied only as intended and maintained with their surroundings in a sanitary condition."

Inspector Ball, while speaking, was facing an audience of the kind that is partially responsible for the conditions of which he complains. It may have been a matter of courtesy that prevented him going further in his talk.

But the causes of which he did not speak and which are apparent to every social worker who has visited such vicinities as those behind the stockyards are the low wages paid to the heads of the families and the grab-all, give-nothing attitude assumed by the landlords.

No father is going to force his family to live in any house but the best he can afford. And when you find families living in foul-smelling, unsanitary, house overrun with rats, it's almost a certainty you will find a family that is trying to exist on starvation wages.

—And the landlords are usually of the type that is after the same per-

centage of profit from the poor families that they get from the more fortunate ones.

It is ridiculous to imagine they're going to build beautiful, sunlit houses to rent to a man whose average is about \$7, as is the case of the employes of Armour, Swift, Morris and the other beef barons.

Mr. Ball has also discovered that boys and girls reared in homes of four or more rooms weigh on the average 11 pounds more and are five inches taller than children reared in a single room.

Ball submitted a table of statistics prepared by Dr. Charles B. Hastings of Toronto, to support his argument for better housing conditions to reduce criminality among city youths. These statistics showed a steady increase in weight and height as the number of rooms in which the children were raised increased.

Upton Sinclair, the Socialist author, who shocked the world a few years ago by an expose of conditions "Back o' th' Yards" in his book, "The Jungle," is firmly convinced that the same rotten conditions still prevail.

"I aimed at the public's heart and accidentally I hit it in the stomach," he said. He went on to say that so long as the public thought their meat was improved, they were satisfied, whereas a recent investigation showed that Chicago stockyard conditions were just as bad as when Sinclair wrote a book about them.

### HOBOES OPEN MEET

Cleveland, O., Jan. 27.—James Eads Howe, millionaire hobo, opened the eighth annual convention of the International Brotherhood Welfare Ass'n. with 400 hoboes in attendance.

The part of Howe's opening address which received most vigorous applause was his denunciation of the city authorities for working men for a night's lodging and a bowl of soup.